

## **Appendix A:**

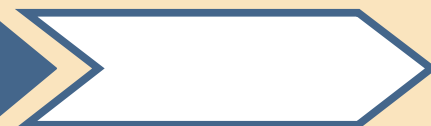
### **Agency Coordination Plan**

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# POTOMAC YARD METRORAIL STATION ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

## Agency Coordination Plan

May 2011



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**Revision History:**

<b>Revision</b>	<b>Date</b>
0	April 21, 2011
1	May 4, 2011

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## Table of Contents

<b>1.0</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF THE COORDINATION PLAN.....</b>	<b>1-1</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>PROJECT BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
2.1	PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED .....	2-1
2.2	LOCATION.....	2-1
<b>3.0</b>	<b>AGENCY COORDINATION .....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
3.1	LIST OF AGENCIES, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....	3-1
3.1.1	Lead Agencies .....	3-1
3.1.2	Cooperating Agencies.....	3-1
3.1.3	Participating Agencies.....	3-1
3.2	INITIAL COORDINATION, COORDINATION POINTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....	3-3
3.2.1	Initial Coordination .....	3-3
3.2.2	Agency Scoping Meeting .....	3-3
3.2.3	Resource Specific Coordination .....	3-3
3.2.4	Coordination Points .....	3-4
3.2.5	Project Contact and Website .....	3-4
3.3	OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR AGENCY INVOLVEMENT .....	3-4
3.3.1	Public Meetings .....	3-4
3.3.2	Public Hearing .....	3-4
<b>4.0</b>	<b>PROJECT SCHEDULE.....</b>	<b>4-1</b>

## Table of Figures

Figure 2-1: Project Study Area and Station Alternatives.....	2-2
Figure 4-1: Initial Project Schedule (as of April 2011) .....	4-1

## Table of Tables

Table 3-1: Lead, Cooperating, and Participating Agencies .....	3-2
Table 3-2: Coordination Points and Responsibilities (as of April 2011) .....	3-5
Table 4-1: Initial Project Schedule (as of April 2011) .....	4-1

**Attachment 1: List of Agencies Invited to be Cooperating or Participating Agencies**

**Attachment 2: Example Invitation Letter to Cooperating Agencies**

**Attachment 3: Example Invitation Letter to Participating Agencies (Federal)**

**Attachment 4: Example Invitation Letter to Participating Agencies (Non-Federal)**

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## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE COORDINATION PLAN

Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU 6002) requires the lead agencies to establish a plan for coordinating public and agency involvement during the environmental review process. This plan informs the public and other agencies of how agency coordination will be accomplished for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Coordination Plan is intended to define how and when the lead agencies will communicate information about the EIS to the cooperating and participating agencies and to the public. The plan also identifies how input from agencies and the public will be solicited and considered.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is the lead federal agency for the development of the EIS. The City of Alexandria (City) is the project sponsor and joint lead agency. FTA has determined that an EIS is the appropriate Class of Action for this project to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The goal of the Agency Coordination Plan is to expedite and improve the environmental review process by clearly establishing agency roles, responsibilities, and expectations. The plan aims to promote good project management through coordination, scheduling, and early resolution of issues. This plan will:

- Identify the early coordination efforts;
- Identify cooperating and participating agencies to be involved in agency coordination;
- Establish the timing and form for agency involvement in defining the project's purpose and need, study area, the range of alternatives to be investigated, and methods and data reports, as well as reviewing the Draft EIS and the selection of the preferred alternative and mitigation strategies;
- Establish the timing and form for public opportunities to be involved in defining the project's purpose and need, study area, the range of alternatives to be investigated, providing input on issues of concern and environmental features, and commenting on the findings presented in the Draft EIS; and
- Describe the communication methods that will be used to inform the community about the project.

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## 2.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to improve accessibility of the Potomac Yard area and provide more transportation choices for current and future residents, employees, and businesses by establishing a new access point to the regional Metrorail system. Currently the study area is not served by Metrorail. An additional access point for the project area was originally recommended in WMATA's 1999 *Transit Expansion Plan* and is now included in the 2010 National Capital Region's *Financially Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan* and has been incorporated into the adopted *City of Alexandria Comprehensive Plan*.

The planned redevelopment and projected travel demand provide an opportunity to increase the transit mode share to more than 50 percent of the trips to and from the project area. Ridership forecasts for 2030 estimate the number of riders accessing the system at the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station would be between 12,600 and 15,900 on an average weekday (*Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Concept Development Study*, 2010). These forecast volumes exceed Year 2030 projections for other existing stations in the City of Alexandria at King Street, Braddock Road, and Eisenhower Avenue.

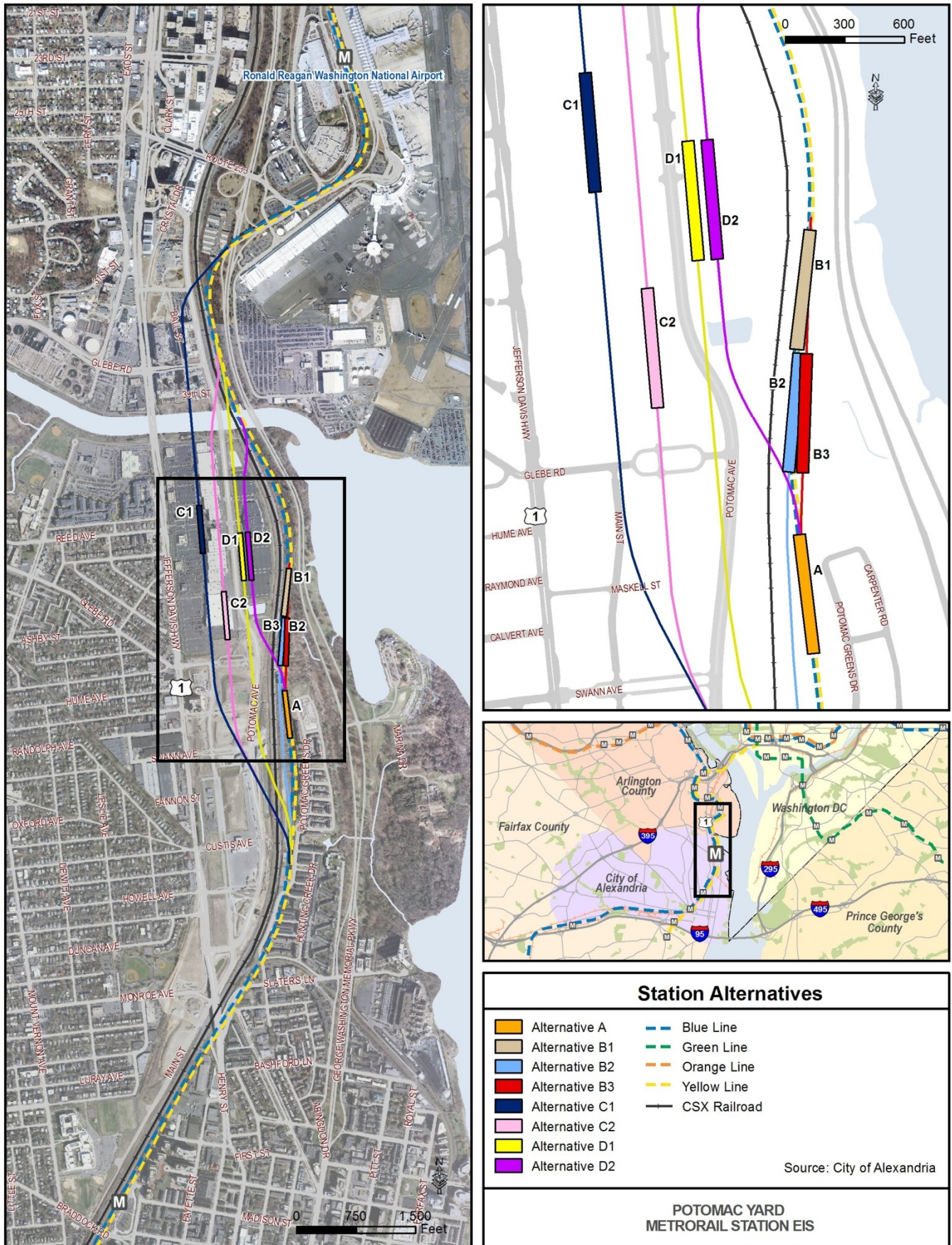
The station is needed to address existing and future travel demand to the area, resulting from the City of Alexandria's planned development of a major transit-oriented mixed-use activity center which includes up to 10.7 million square feet of new development. The project area is located within a 3.1-mile segment of the Metrorail system that currently does not have a station access point and is the longest portion of the Metrorail system with similar development densities that is not served by a station.

The study area is currently served by local bus services that operate in mixed traffic and have numerous stops to serve local travel in the U.S. Route 1 corridor. This results in relatively long transit travel times to access the site. The planned Crystal City-Potomac Yard Transitway will improve reliability of local transit services along the U.S. Route 1 corridor; however, regional access to the regional Metrorail system is still needed. The project would also provide a safe and reliable alternative to automobile travel to and from the Potomac Yard area.

### 2.2 Location

As shown in **Figure 2-1**, the project study area is located in the northeast area of the City of Alexandria, in proximity to the City's boundary with Arlington County. Potomac Yard was a former railyard owned by CSX Transportation and its predecessor railroads. Eight alternative station locations (shown in Figure 2-1) are being evaluated at this phase in the NEPA process.

**Figure 2-1: Project Study Area and Station Alternatives**





## 3.0 AGENCY COORDINATION

### 3.1 List of Agencies, Roles and Responsibilities

A total of 21 federal, state, regional, and local agencies will be involved as participating or cooperating agencies for this project. The lead, cooperating, and participating agencies for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station EIS are listed in **Table 3-1**. The full list of agencies invited to be cooperating or participating agencies is provided in **Attachment 1**.

#### 3.1.1 Lead Agencies

FTA is the designated lead federal agency for this project. As the lead federal agency, FTA is responsible for the implementation of NEPA regulations, including management of the SAFETEA-LU 6002 process, preparation of the EIS, and provision of opportunities for public and agency involvement.

The City of Alexandria is the project sponsor and the joint lead agency, as provided for in 23 U.S.C. 139(c)(3).

#### 3.1.2 Cooperating Agencies

Pursuant to 40 CFR 1501.6, cooperating agencies are those governmental agencies specifically requested by FTA to participate during the environmental evaluation process for the project. The United States Department of Transportation NEPA regulations (23 CFR 771.111(d)) require that those federal agencies with jurisdiction by law (with permitting or land transfer authority) be invited to be cooperating agencies in the NEPA process. FTA may also invite any agency with special expertise with respect to any environmental issue, which should be addressed in the EIS to be a cooperating agency. A state or local agency of similar qualifications or, when the effects are on lands of tribal interest, a Native American tribe, may by agreement with the lead agencies also become a cooperating agency. Cooperating agencies are also invited to be participating agencies. An example of the cooperating agency invitation letter, mailed by FTA during scoping, is provided in **Attachment 2**.

Cooperating agencies are responsible for reviewing the EIS for sufficiency, as well as providing comments on purpose and need, impact assessment methodologies, and the range of alternatives. The cooperating agencies for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station EIS are:

- National Park Service (NPS). NPS owns and operates the George Washington Memorial Parkway within the study area.
- Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). WMATA owns and operates the Metrorail system.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) declined the invitation to be a cooperating agency, but expressed its intent to act as a participating agency. The USACE has jurisdiction over waters of the U.S., including wetlands.

If new information reveals the need to request another agency to serve as a cooperating agency, FTA will issue that agency an invitation.

#### 3.1.3 Participating Agencies

Participating agencies are federal and non-federal governmental agencies that may have an interest in the project, and are therefore formally invited to participate in the environmental review of the project. Any federal agency that is invited to participate in the environmental review process for a project shall be designated as a participating agency unless the invited agency informs the lead agency, in writing, by the deadline specified in the invitation that the invited agency (1) has no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the project, (2) has no expertise or information relevant to the project, and (3) does not intend to submit comments on the project. A state, tribal, or local agency must respond affirmatively to the invitation to be designated as a participating agency. An example of the invitation letter sent to potential federal participating

agencies is provided in **Attachment 3**, and an example of the invitation letter sent to potential non-federal participating agencies is provided in **Attachment 4**. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security declined the invitation to be a participating agency.

**Table 3-1: Lead, Cooperating, and Participating Agencies**

Jurisdiction	Agency	Agency Type/ Coordination Role	Regulatory Role or Technical Expertise
<b>Federal</b>	Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	Lead Federal Agency	NEPA Compliance
	National Park Service (NPS)	Cooperating Agency	Federal Parklands
	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Participating Agency	NEPA Compliance/ Hazardous Materials/ Federal Sustainable Communities Initiatives
	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Participating Agency	Wetlands and Water Quality
	U.S. Department of Defense	Participating Agency	Economic, Security and Travel Demand Management
	Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	Participating Agency	Airport Clear Zones
	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	Participating Agency	Roadway Traffic and Operations
	Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	Participating Agency	Federal Regulator - adjacent Class I Freight Rail Corridor
	National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)	Participating Agency	Specific Regulatory Authorities in the National Capital Region
	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Participating Agency	Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species
<b>Regional</b>	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)	Cooperating Agency	NEPA Compliance
	Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority	Participating Agency	Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Operator
<b>State</b>	Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation	Participating Agency	Operational & Capital Funding for Transit Agencies
	Virginia Department of Transportation	Participating Agency	Roadway Traffic and Operations
	Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR)	Participating Agency	Cultural Resources
<b>City of Alexandria</b>	City of Alexandria	Joint Lead Agency and Project Sponsor	Local Project Jurisdiction
	Alexandria Police Department	Participating Agency	Local Project Jurisdiction
	Department of Planning and Zoning (P&Z)	Participating Agency	Local Project Jurisdiction
	Office of Historic Alexandria	Participating Agency	Local Project Jurisdiction
<b>Other Jurisdictions</b>	Arlington County Department of Environmental Services (DES)	Participating Agency	Neighboring Jurisdiction

All participating agencies will be responsible for the following:

- Participating in the scoping process;
- Providing comments on purpose and need, methodologies, and the range of alternatives;
- Identifying any issues of concern regarding the project's environmental or socioeconomic impacts; and
- Providing meaningful and timely input on unresolved issues.

Accepting the designation as a participating agency does not indicate project support and does not provide an agency with increased oversight or approval authority beyond its statutory limits, if applicable.

If, during the progress of the project, new information indicates that an agency not previously requested to be a participating agency does indeed have authority, jurisdiction, acknowledged expertise or information relevant to the project, then FTA will promptly extend an invitation to that agency to be a participating agency. FTA will consider whether this new information affects any previous decisions on the project.

## **3.2 Initial Coordination, Coordination Points, and Responsibilities**

### **3.2.1 Initial Coordination**

After several initial coordination meetings, FTA notified the City of Alexandria that an EIS would be required for construction of a new Metrorail station at Potomac Yard in a letter dated July 20, 2010. Following the project initiation, FTA prepared a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, as required by 40 CFR 1501.7. The NOI was published in the *Federal Register* (Vol. 76, No. 18) on Thursday, January 27, 2011. Invitation letters were sent to potential cooperating and participating agencies on January 27, 2011.

Notification of the preparation of the EIS, as well as an announcement of the public scoping meetings, was published in the *Alexandria Times* and the *Alexandria Gazette Packet* on February 3, 2011, and in *El Tiempo Latino* on February 4, 2011.

### **3.2.2 Agency Scoping Meeting**

An agency scoping meeting was held on February 10, 2011 at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center in Alexandria, Virginia. The purpose of the agency scoping meeting was to provide an opportunity for the early identification of significant issues related to the project. The agency scoping meeting preceded the public scoping meeting which occurred on the same date and at the same location.

As part of the scoping process, a Scoping Booklet was produced and made available via the internet (copies were also available at the scoping meeting). The booklet included an overview of and invited comments on the project and the NEPA process, the purpose and need, and the initial range of alternatives. Comments were due by March 15, 2011 (30 days from the snow date for the scoping meeting).

### **3.2.3 Resource Specific Coordination**

As discussed, participating agencies likely have a specific regulatory role in the environmental review process pursuant to federal law. The project team may need to consult with a participating agency on specific regulatory matters as appropriate. The consultations would occur throughout the EIS development process.

Other participating agencies may have a specific technical or regulatory role under state or local law. The project team will consult with agencies as appropriate where their expertise is needed. Consultations would be held throughout the EIS process. Coordination with participating agencies may occur in the form of conference calls, emails or meetings.

### 3.2.4 Coordination Points

Cooperating and participating agencies will have defined opportunities for meaningful participation in the decision-making process for the project. These opportunities are outlined in **Table 3-2**.

### 3.2.5 Project Contact and Website

The FTA project contact for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station EIS is Melissa Barlow. She can be contacted via phone at 202-219-3565 or via email at [melissa.barlow@dot.gov](mailto:melissa.barlow@dot.gov). Information on the project is also provided on the internet at <http://potomacyardmetro.com/>.

## 3.3 Other Opportunities for Agency Involvement

### 3.3.1 Public Meetings

The public meeting schedule will coincide with the scoping stage, identification of existing conditions, and circulation of the Draft EIS. Agencies identified in this Plan will be formally notified of the public meetings and the public hearing planned for March 2013.

### 3.3.2 Public Hearing

The WMATA Compact requires a public hearing before the WMATA Board of Directors make a change to the Mass Transit Plan, including adding a station. This hearing is typically combined with the public hearing required following publication of the Draft EIS.

The public hearing is anticipated to occur in March 2013. The public hearing and a 45-day review period will provide a formal opportunity for review and comment on the Draft EIS.



**Table 3-2: Coordination Points and Responsibilities (as of May 2011)**

Coordination Point	Format	Timeframe	Lead Agency Responsibility	Input from Agencies	Agencies Responsible for Input
Project Management Team (PMT) Meetings Lead and Cooperating Agencies	Meeting	Bi-Monthly November 2010 through Fall 2013	Draft project materials and analysis; identification of issues and coordination needs	Collaboration and input on project materials and analysis, as well as project issues and coordination needs	Cooperating agencies
Issue Notice of Intent (NOI)	<i>Federal Register</i> notice	January 2011	Publish NOI in the <i>Federal Register</i> and notices in local newspaper; invite agencies and public to scoping meetings	Comments on NOI	Participating and cooperating agencies; general public
Issue Cooperating and Participating Agency Invitation Letters	Letter	January 2011	Send letters inviting agencies to act as cooperating or participating agencies	Letter accepting or declining the invitation	Participating and cooperating agencies (all invited)
Project Scoping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency Coordination, Document Review</li> <li>Timeframes, and Scheduling</li> <li>Data Sources and Previous Studies</li> </ul>	Agency Scoping Meeting (2/10/11), Resource Agency Meetings, Conference Calls, Phone or Email (as required), Written Correspondence	February 2011 – March 2011	Provide materials and hold scoping meeting; include draft purpose and need statement, initial range of alternatives, and potential environmental effects	Comments on draft purpose and need, initial range of alternatives, and issues of concern	Participating and cooperating agencies; general public
Impact Assessment Methodologies	Resource Agency Meetings, Conference Calls, Phone or Email (as required), Written Correspondence	March 2011 – Fall 2011	Provide opportunity to collaborate on the development and review of methodologies required for the analysis of alternatives	Collaboration and input through the development of methodologies, and comments on proposed methodologies	Participating and cooperating agencies
Impact Assessment and Evaluation of Alternatives	Resource Agency Meetings, Conference Calls, Phone or Email (as required), Written Correspondence	March 2011 – Fall 2012	Identification of potential impacts to resources as a result of the alternatives	Identification of any issues of concern regarding potential environmental or socioeconomic impacts of the alternatives, including issues that could substantially delay permit approval	Participating and cooperating agencies
Circulation of Draft EIS	Public hearing; notice of public availability of document; document for review and comment	Spring 2013	Make available the Draft EIS to cooperating and participating agencies and the public with the identified preliminary preferred alternative	Comments on the Draft EIS	Participating and cooperating agencies; general public

Coordination Point	Format	Timeframe	Lead Agency Responsibility	Input from Agencies	Agencies Responsible for Input
Circulation of Final EIS	Notice of availability of document; document for review	Fall 2013	Make available the Final EIS to cooperating and participating agencies and the public	None	None
Issue Record of Decision (ROD)	<i>Federal Register</i> and newspaper notice	Winter 2014	Publish ROD in local newspaper and the <i>Federal Register</i>	None	None

## 4.0 PROJECT SCHEDULE

The initial project schedule is shown in **Table 4-1** and **Figure 4-1**. The schedule includes key milestones and decision-points in the EIS process.

**Table 4-1: Initial Project Schedule (as of May 2011)**

Project Milestone	Timeframe
<b>Scoping</b>	
Final Scoping Booklet and Notice of Intent	January 2011
Scoping Meetings	February 2011
Draft Scoping Report	February 2011
Final Scoping Report	March 2011
<b>Public Meetings</b>	
Progress of EIS, Public Meeting	Fall 2011
<b>Public Hearing and Notice of Draft EIS and Final EIS</b>	
Draft EIS Notice of Availability	Spring 2013
Public Hearing Notice	Spring 2013
Public Hearing	Spring 2013
Submittal of Public Hearing Staff Report	Summer 2013
WMATA Board Project Decision	Summer 2013
Final EIS Notice of Availability	Fall 2013
Record of Decision	Winter 2014

### 4.1 Agency Coordination Plan Update Schedule

In order to ensure that the agency coordination plan is updated as the project evolves, the plan will be revised approximately every six months. The Agency Coordination Plan will be updated as follows:

- Fall 2011
- Spring 2012
- Fall 2012
- Spring 2013

**Figure 4-1: Initial Project Schedule (as of May 2011)**

TASKS	2011				2012				2013				2014
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
EIS Scoping Process													
Final Scoping Booklet and Notice of Intent													
Scoping Meetings													
Draft Scoping Report													
Final Scoping Report													
EIS Preparation													
Development of Impact Assessment Methodologies													
Impact Assessment and Evaluation of Alternatives													
Circulation of Draft EIS													
Draft EIS Notice of Availability													
Public Hearing Notice													
Public Hearing													
Submittal of Public Hearing Staff Report													
WMATA Board Project Decision													
Circulation of Final EIS													
Record of Decision (ROD)													

## **Attachment 1**

### **Agencies Invited to be Participating or Cooperating Agencies**

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Jurisdiction	Agency	Agency Type/ Coordination Role	Regulatory Role or Technical Expertise
Federal	Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	Lead Federal Agency	NEPA Compliance
	National Park Service (NPS)	Cooperating Agency	Federal Parklands
	National Park Service/George Washington Memorial Parkway	Cooperating Agency	Federal Parklands
	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Participating Agency	NEPA Compliance/Hazardous Materials/Federal Sustainable Communities Initiatives
	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Potential Cooperating Agency	Wetlands and Water Quality
	U.S. Department of Defense	Participating Agency	Economic, Security and Travel Demand Management
	U.S. Department of Homeland Security	Participating Agency	Transit System Security
	Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	Participating Agency	Airport Clear Zones
	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	Participating Agency	Roadway Traffic and Operations
	Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	Participating Agency	Federal Regulator - adjacent Class I Freight Rail Corridor
	National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)	Participating Agency	Specific Regulatory Authorities in the National Capital Region
	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Participating Agency	Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species
Regional	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)	Cooperating Agency	NEPA Compliance
	Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC)	Participating Agency	Joint Partner Agency for VRE
	Potomac Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)	Participating Agency	Joint Partner Agency for VRE
	Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority	Participating Agency	Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Operator
	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Commission	Participating Agency	Private Sector Motor Carrier Regulation
State	Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	Participating Agency	Endangered and Threatened Plant and Insect Species Compliance
	Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation	Participating Agency	Threatened and Endangered Species and Natural Resource Conservation
	Virginia Department of Environmental Quality	Participating Agency	Coastal Zone Management Program Compliance
	Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries	Participating Agency	Threatened and Endangered Species Compliance
	Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation	Participating Agency	Operational & Capital Funding for Transit Agencies
	Virginia Department of Transportation	Participating Agency	Roadway Traffic and Operations
	Virginia Department of Historic Resources (SHPO)	Participating Agency	Cultural Resources
	Virginia Marine Resources Commission	Participating Agency	Wetlands Compliance
City of Alexandria	City of Alexandria	Joint-Lead Agency, Project Applicant and Sponsor	Local Project Jurisdiction
	Alexandria Fire Department	Participating Agency	Local Project Jurisdiction
	Alexandria Health Department	Participating Agency	Local Project Jurisdiction
	Alexandria Police Department	Participating Agency	Local Project Jurisdiction
	City Manager's Office	Participating Agency	Local Project Jurisdiction
	Department of Planning and Zoning (P&Z)	Participating Agency	Local Project Jurisdiction
	Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities	Participating Agency	Local Project Jurisdiction
	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES)	Participating Agency	Local Project Jurisdiction
	Office of Historic Alexandria	Participating Agency	Local Project Jurisdiction
Other Jurisdictions	Arlington County Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development (CPHD)	Participating Agency	Neighboring Jurisdiction
	Arlington County Department of Environmental Services (DES)	Participating Agency	Neighboring Jurisdiction

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## **Attachment 2**

### **Example Invitation Letter to Cooperating Agencies**

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U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

REGION III  
Delaware, District of  
Columbia, Maryland,  
Pennsylvania, Virginia,  
West Virginia

1760 Market Street  
Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4124  
215-656-7100  
215-656-7260 (fax)

JAN 25 2011

To Potomac Yard Metrorail Station NEPA Process Invitees

Subject: Invitation to become a Cooperating Agency Pursuant to NEPA  
Potomac Yard Metrorail Station  
Alexandria, Virginia

Dear NEPA Process Invitees:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as the Federal lead agency, in cooperation with the City of Alexandria, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and the National Park Service (NPS), is initiating the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Potomac Yard Metrorail Station. The proposed project includes the construction of a new Metrorail Station located at Potomac Yard within the City of Alexandria along the existing Blue and Yellow Lines between the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station and the Braddock Road Station. The purpose of the project is to improve accessibility of the Potomac Yard area and provide more transportation choices for current and future residents, employees, and businesses by establishing a new access point to the regional Metrorail system. This additional access point is needed to address existing and future travel demand in the area resulting from the City of Alexandria's planned development of a major transit-oriented mixed-use activity center in the vicinity of the proposed station. The attached project summary, which includes a project description and location map, provides more details. The National Park Service is a cooperating agency on this project because at least one of the alternatives has the potential to impact the George Washington Memorial Parkway, a unit of the national park system that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users establishes an enhanced environmental review process for certain FTA projects, increasing the transparency of the process, as well as opportunities for participation. The requirements of Section 6002 apply to this project. As part of the environmental review process, lead agencies must identify, as early as practicable, any other Federal and non-Federal agencies that may have an interest in the project, and invite such agencies to become cooperating and/or participating agencies in the environmental review process. A participating agency is any federal, state or local agency or Native American tribe that has an interest in the project. Participating agencies are afforded the opportunity, together with the public, to be involved in defining the purpose of and need for the project, as well as in determining the range of alternatives to be considered for the project. In addition, participating agencies are asked to:

- Provide input on the impact assessment methodologies and level of detail in your agency's area of expertise;
- Participate in coordination meetings, conference calls, and joint field reviews, as appropriate; and
- Review and comment on sections of the pre-draft or pre-final environmental documents to communicate any concerns of your agency on the adequacy of the document, the alternatives considered, and the anticipated impacts and mitigation.

A cooperating agency is any federal, state, or local agency or Native American tribe that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposed project or project alternative. Your agency has been identified as one that may have an interest in this project because of its regulatory role or special expertise; accordingly, you are being extended this invitation to become actively involved as a cooperating agency in the environmental review process for the project.

As a cooperating agency, you will have a higher degree of authority, responsibility, and involvement in the environmental review process. In addition to those responsibilities detailed for participating agencies, we request your agency:

- Participate in scoping and other early stages of the environmental review process;
- Participate in the preparation of environmental analyses concerning portions of the EIS for which your agency has special expertise; and
- Provide comments on the range of alternatives to be assessed in the EIS, the criteria and methodology for evaluating the alternatives, and the scope of issues to be addressed in the EIS as well as any other issues you identify as important.

We expect your agency's involvement to entail only those areas under its jurisdiction.

In order to give your agency adequate opportunity to weigh the relevance of your participation in this environmental review process, a written response to this invitation is not due until after the interagency scoping meeting anticipated to take place on February 10, 2011 at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 West Reed Avenue, Alexandria, VA at 3:00 pm. You or your delegate is invited to represent your agency at this meeting. If the City of Alexandria public schools are closed due to inclement weather on February 10, 2011, the meeting will be held at the same time on the snow date of February 15, 2011.

**If, after this meeting, you elect to become a cooperating agency, please sign the enclosed agreement and mail or transmit electronically to Melissa P. Barlow by March 15, 2011.**

Mailed responses should be sent to:

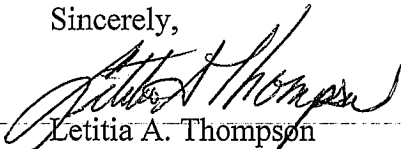
Melissa P. Barlow Community Planner  
Federal Transit Administration -DC Metro  
1990 K Street, NW, Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20006  
(202) 219-3565 office  
(202) 219-3545 fax  
[Melissa.barlow@dot.gov](mailto:Melissa.barlow@dot.gov) email

If you do not accept this invitation to become a cooperating agency, your agency will become a participating agency as defined by Section 6002. **If, however, you elect not to become a participating agency, please complete and sign the enclosed document by March 15, 2011, indicating that your agency:**

- Has no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the project;
- Has no expertise or information relevant to the project; and
- Does not intend to submit comments on the project.

Additional information will be forthcoming during the scoping process. If you have questions regarding this invitation, please contact Melissa Barlow at 202-219-3565 or [Melissa.barlow@dot.gov](mailto:Melissa.barlow@dot.gov).

Sincerely,



Letitia A. Thompson  
Region III Administrator

Attachments: Project Summary  
Agreement

cc: Jim Ashe, WMATA  
Sandra Marks, City of Alexandria

**I CONCUR our agency's role as a cooperating agency on the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Project under SAFETEA-LU 6002:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print or Type NameTitle

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Agency and Phone number or Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
SignatureDate

**I CONCUR our agency's role as a participating agency on the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Project under SAFETEA-LU 6002:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print or Type NameTitle

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Agency and Phone number or Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
SignatureDate

**I DECLINE our agency's role as a participating agency on the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Project under SAFETEA-LU 6002 for the following reasons (check appropriate reasons):**

\_\_\_\_\_ Have no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the project

\_\_\_\_\_ Have no expertise or information relevant to the project

\_\_\_\_\_ Do not intend to submit comments on the project

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print or Type NameTitle

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Agency and Phone number or Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
SignatureDate

*Please email or mail a response by March 15, 2011 to:*

Melissa P. Barlow, Community Planner, Federal Transit Administration-DC Metro, 1990 K Street NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20006, 202-219-3545 (fax) or [Melissa.barlow@dot.gov](mailto:Melissa.barlow@dot.gov).

**Attachment 3**

**Example Invitation Letter to Participating Agencies**

**(Federal)**

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U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

REGION III  
Delaware, District of  
Columbia, Maryland,  
Pennsylvania, Virginia,  
West Virginia

1760 Market Street  
Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4124  
215-656-7100  
215-656-7260 (fax)

**JAN 25 2011**

To Potomac Yard Metrorail Station NEPA Process Invitees

Subject: Invitation to become a Participating Agency Pursuant to NEPA  
Potomac Yard Metrorail Station  
Alexandria, Virginia

Dear NEPA Process Invitees:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as the Federal lead agency, in cooperation with the City of Alexandria, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and the National Park Service (NPS), is initiating the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Potomac Yard Metrorail Station. The proposed project includes the construction of a new Metrorail Station located at Potomac Yard within the City of Alexandria along the existing Blue and Yellow Lines between the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station and the Braddock Road Station. The purpose of the project is to improve accessibility of the Potomac Yard area and provide more transportation choices for current and future residents, employees, and businesses by establishing a new access point to the regional Metrorail system. This additional access point is needed to address existing and future travel demand in the area resulting from the City of Alexandria's planned development of a major transit-oriented mixed-use activity center in the vicinity of the proposed station. The attached project summary, which includes a project description and location map, provides more details. The National Park Service is a cooperating agency on this project because at least one of the alternatives has the potential to impact the George Washington Memorial Parkway, a unit of the national park system that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users establishes an enhanced environmental review process for certain FTA projects, increasing the transparency of the process, as well as opportunities for participation. The requirements of Section 6002 apply to this project. As part of the environmental review process, lead agencies must identify, as early as practicable, any other Federal and non-Federal agencies that may have an interest in the project, and invite such agencies to become cooperating and/or participating agencies in the environmental review process. Because of its regulatory role or technical expertise, your agency has been identified as one that may have an interest in this project; accordingly, you are being extended this invitation to become actively involved as a participating agency in the environmental review process for the project.

As a participating agency, you will be afforded the opportunity, together with the public, to be involved in defining the purpose of and need for the project, as well as in determining the range of alternatives to be considered for the project. In addition, we request your agency:

- Provide input on the impact assessment methodologies and level of detail in your agency's area of expertise;
- Participate in coordination meetings, conference calls, and joint field reviews, as appropriate; and
- Review and comment on sections of the pre-draft or pre-final environmental documents to communicate any concerns of your agency on the adequacy of the document, the alternatives considered, and the anticipated impacts and mitigation.

In order to give your agency adequate opportunity to weigh the relevance of your participation in this environmental review process, a written response to this invitation is not due until after the interagency scoping meeting anticipated to take place on February 10, 2011 at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 West Reed Avenue, Alexandria, VA at 3:00 pm. You or your delegate is invited to represent your agency at this meeting. If the City of Alexandria public schools are closed due to inclement weather on February 10, 2011, the meeting will be held at the same time on the snow date of February 15, 2011.

**If, after this meeting, you elect not to become a participating agency, please complete and sign the enclosed document by March 15, 2011, indicating that your agency:**

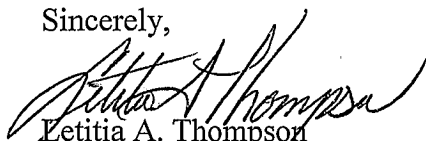
- Has no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the project;
- Has no expertise or information relevant to the project; and
- Does not intend to submit comments on the project.

All responses must be mailed or transmitted electronically to Melissa Barlow prior to March 10, 2011. Mailed responses should be sent to:

Melissa P. Barlow Community Planner  
Federal Transit Administration -DC Metro  
1990 K Street, NW, Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20006  
(202) 219-3565 office  
(202) 219-3545 fax  
[Melissa.barlow@dot.gov](mailto:Melissa.barlow@dot.gov) email

Additional information will be forthcoming during the scoping process. If you have questions regarding this invitation, please contact Melissa Barlow at 202-219-3565 or [Melissa.barlow@dot.gov](mailto:Melissa.barlow@dot.gov).

Sincerely,

  
Letitia A. Thompson  
Region III Administrator

Attachments: Project Summary  
Agreement

cc: Jim Ashe, WMATA  
Sandra Marks, City of Alexandria

**I CONCUR our agency's role as a participating agency on the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Project under SAFETEA-LU 6002:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print or Type NameTitle

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Agency and Phone number or Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
SignatureDate

**I DECLINE FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS (check appropriate reasons):**

- ☐ Have no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the project  
☐ Have no expertise or information relevant to the project  
☐ Do not intend to submit comments on the project

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print or Type NameTitle

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Agency and Phone number or Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
SignatureDate

*Please email or mail a response by March 15, 2011 to:*

Melissa P. Barlow, Community Planner, Federal Transit Administration-DC Metro, 1990 K Street NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20006, 202-219-3545 (fax) or [Melissa.barlow@dot.gov](mailto:Melissa.barlow@dot.gov).

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**Attachment 4**

**Example Invitation Letter to Participating Agencies**

**(Non-Federal)**

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U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

REGION III  
Delaware, District of  
Columbia, Maryland,  
Pennsylvania, Virginia,  
West Virginia

1760 Market Street  
Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4124  
215-656-7100  
215-656-7260 (fax)

**JAN 25 2011**

To Potomac Yard Metrorail Station NEPA Process Invitees

Subject: Invitation to become a Participating Agency Pursuant to NEPA  
Potomac Yard Metrorail Station  
Alexandria, Virginia

Dear NEPA Process Invitees:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as the Federal lead agency, in cooperation with the City of Alexandria, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and the National Park Service (NPS), is initiating the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Potomac Yard Metrorail Station. The proposed project includes the construction of a new Metrorail Station located at Potomac Yard within the City of Alexandria along the existing Blue and Yellow Lines between the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station and the Braddock Road Station. The purpose of the project is to improve accessibility of the Potomac Yard area and provide more transportation choices for current and future residents, employees, and businesses by establishing a new access point to the regional Metrorail system. This additional access point is needed to address existing and future travel demand in the area resulting from the City of Alexandria's planned development of a major transit-oriented mixed-use activity center in the vicinity of the proposed station. The attached project summary, which includes a project description and location map, provides more details. The National Park Service is a cooperating agency on this project because at least one of the alternatives has the potential to impact the George Washington Memorial Parkway, a unit of the national park system that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users establishes an enhanced environmental review process for certain FTA projects, increasing the transparency of the process, as well as opportunities for participation. The requirements of Section 6002 apply to this project. As part of the environmental review process, lead agencies must identify, as early as practicable, any other Federal and non-Federal agencies that may have an interest in the project, and invite such agencies to become cooperating and/or participating agencies in the environmental review process. Because of its regulatory role or technical expertise, your agency has been identified as one that may have an interest in this project; accordingly, you are being extended this invitation to become actively involved as a participating agency in the environmental review process for the project.

As a participating agency, you will be afforded the opportunity, together with the public, to be involved in defining the purpose of and need for the project, as well as in determining the range of alternatives to be considered for the project. In addition, we request your agency:

- Provide input on the impact assessment methodologies and level of detail in your agency's area of expertise;
- Participate in coordination meetings, conference calls, and joint field reviews, as appropriate; and
- Review and comment on sections of the pre-draft or pre-final environmental documents to communicate any concerns of your agency on the adequacy of the document, the alternatives considered, and the anticipated impacts and mitigation.

In order to give your agency adequate opportunity to weigh the relevance of your participation in this environmental review process, a written response to this invitation is not due until after the interagency scoping meeting anticipated to take place on February 10, 2011 at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 West Reed Avenue, Alexandria, VA at 3:00 pm. You or your delegate is invited to represent your agency at this meeting. If the City of Alexandria public schools are closed due to inclement weather on February 10, 2011, the meeting will be held at the same time on the snow date of February 15, 2011.

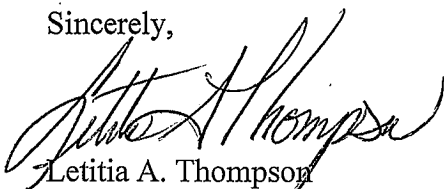
**If, after this meeting, you elect to become a participating agency, please sign the enclosed agreement and mail or transmit electronically to Melissa Barlow prior to March 15, 2011.**

Mailed responses should be sent to:

Melissa P. Barlow Community Planner  
Federal Transit Administration -DC Metro  
1990 K Street, NW, Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20006  
(202) 219-3565 office  
(202) 219-3545 fax  
Melissa.barlow@dot.gov email

Additional information will be forthcoming during the scoping process. If you have questions regarding this invitation, please contact Melissa Barlow at 202-219-3565 or Melissa.barlow@dot.gov.

Sincerely,



Letitia A. Thompson  
Region III Administrator

Attachments: Project Summary  
Agreement

cc: Jim Ashe, WMATA  
Sandra Marks, City of Alexandria



**I CONCUR our agency's role as a participating agency on the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Project under SAFETEA-LU 6002:**

---

Print or Type NameTitle

---

Name of Agency and Phone number or Email

---

SignatureDate

*Please email or mail a response by March 15, 2011 to:*

Melissa P. Barlow, Community Planner, Federal Transit Administration-DC Metro, 1990 K Street NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20006, 202-219-3545 (fax) or [Melissa.barlow@dot.gov](mailto:Melissa.barlow@dot.gov).

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## **Appendix B:**

### **Notice of Intent**

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In view of escorting requirements, non-Government attendees should plan to arrive 15 minutes before the meeting begins. Requests for reasonable accommodation should be made to Sherry Booth prior to Tuesday, February 8th. Requests made after that date will be considered, but might not be possible to fulfill.

Personal data is requested pursuant to Public Law 99-399 (Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act of 1986), as amended; Public Law 107-56 (USA PATRIOT Act); and Executive Order 13356. The purpose of the collection is to validate the identity of individuals who enter Department facilities. The data will be entered into the Visitor Access Control System (VACS-D) database. Please see the Privacy Impact Assessment for VACS-D at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/100305.pdf> for additional information.

For additional information, contact Deputy Outreach Coordinator Tiffany Enoch, Office of Economic Policy Analysis and Public Diplomacy, Bureau of Economic, Energy and Business Affairs, at (202) 647-2231 or [EnochT@state.gov](mailto:EnochT@state.gov).

Dated: January 21, 2011.

**Maryruth Coleman,**

*Office Director, Office of Economic Policy Analysis and Public Diplomacy, U.S. Department of State.*

[FR Doc. 2011-1785 Filed 1-26-11; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4710-07-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee—Public Teleconference

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee Teleconference.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, 5 U.S.C. App. 2), notice is hereby given of a teleconference of the Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee (COMSTAC). The teleconference will take place on Tuesday, February 15, 2011, starting at 1:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Individuals who plan to participate should contact Susan Lender, DFO, (the Contact Person listed below) by phone or e-mail for the teleconference call in number.

The proposed agenda for this teleconference is to continue the discussion started during the January 20, 2011, teleconference. This discussion concerns the structure of the COMSTAC working groups and the organization of the COMSTAC meetings themselves.

Interested members of the public may submit relevant written statements for the COMSTAC members to consider under the advisory process. Statements may concern the issues and agenda items mentioned above or additional issues that may be relevant for the U.S. commercial space transportation industry. Interested parties wishing to submit written statements should contact Susan Lender, DFO, (the Contact Person listed below) in writing (mail or e-mail) by February 11, 2011, so that the information can be made available to COMSTAC members for their review and consideration before the February 15, 2011, teleconference. Written statements should be supplied in the following formats: One hard copy with original signature or one electronic copy via e-mail.

An agenda will be posted on the FAA Web site at <http://www.faa.gov/go/ast>.

Individuals who plan to participate and need special assistance should inform the Contact Person listed below in advance of the meeting.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Susan Lender (AST-100), Office of Commercial Space Transportation (AST), 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 331, Washington, DC 20591, telephone (202) 267-8029; e-mail [susan.lender@faa.gov](mailto:susan.lender@faa.gov). Complete information regarding COMSTAC is available on the FAA Web site at: [http://www.faa.gov/about/office\\_org/headquarters\\_offices/ast/advisory\\_committee/](http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ast/advisory_committee/).

Issued in Washington, DC, January 21, 2011.

**George C. Nield,**

*Associate Administrator for Commercial Space Transportation.*

[FR Doc. 2011-1769 Filed 1-26-11; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-13-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Transit Administration

#### Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for a Potomac Yard Metrorail Station in Alexandria, VA

**AGENCY:** Federal Transit Administration (FTA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as the Federal lead agency, in cooperation with the City of Alexandria, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and the National Park Service (NPS), is issuing this Notice of Intent (NOI) to advise the public that it proposes to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assess the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed construction and operation of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station. The proposed project, described more completely within, would consist of the construction of a Metrorail infill station along the existing combined Blue and Yellow Lines between the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station and the Braddock Road Station. The purpose of this notice is to alert interested parties regarding the intent to prepare the EIS, to provide information on the nature of the proposed project and possible alternatives, and to invite public participation in the EIS process.

**DATES:** Comments on the scope of the EIS, including the project's purpose and need, the alternatives to be considered, the impacts to be evaluated, and the methodologies to be used in the evaluations should be sent before March 15, 2011. See **ADDRESSES** below for the address to which written comments may be sent. Scoping meetings to accept comments on the scope of the EIS will be held on the following date:

- **Agency Scoping Meeting:** Thursday, February 10, 2011, Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 West Reed Avenue, Alexandria, VA at 3 p.m. Representatives from Federal, State, regional, Tribal, and local agencies that may have an interest in any aspect of the project will be invited to serve as either participating or cooperating agencies.

- **Public Scoping Meetings:** Thursday, February 10, 2011, Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 West Reed Avenue, Alexandria, VA at 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

The buildings used for the scoping meetings are accessible to persons with disabilities. Spanish language materials and interpreters will be provided at the scoping meetings. Anyone who requires special assistance at a scoping meeting should contact Jim Ashe at WMATA at (202) 962-1745 or [jashe@wmata.com](mailto:jashe@wmata.com) at least 3 days prior to the meeting. A scoping packet is available on the project Web site at <http://www.potomacyardmetro.com> or by contacting Jim Ashe at the telephone number or e-mail address above. Copies

will also be available at the scoping meetings.

If the City of Alexandria public schools are closed due to inclement weather on February 10, 2011, the public and agency scoping meetings will be held at the same times on the snow date of February 15, 2011.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments will be accepted at the public scoping meetings or they may be sent on or before March 15, 2011 by e-mail to [comments@potomacyardmetro.com](mailto:comments@potomacyardmetro.com) or by regular mail to Potomac Yard Metrorail Station EIS, P.O. Box 25132, Alexandria, VA 22313.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Melissa Barlow, Community Planner, Federal Transit Administration, DC Metro Office, 1990 K Street, NW., Suite 510, Washington, DC 20006, [Melissa.barlow@dot.gov](mailto:Melissa.barlow@dot.gov) or (202) 219-3565; or Jim Ashe, Manager, Environmental Planning and Compliance Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, 600 5th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20001, [jash@wmata.com](mailto:jash@wmata.com) or (202) 962-1745.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### Scoping

FTA invites all interested individuals, organizations, public agencies, and Native American Tribes to comment on the scope of the EIS, including the project's purpose and need, the alternatives to be studied, the impacts to be evaluated, and the evaluation methods to be used. Comments should address (1) feasible alternatives that may better achieve the project's purpose and need with fewer adverse impacts, and (2) any significant environmental impacts relating to the alternatives.

NEPA "scoping" (Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 1501.7) has specific and fairly limited objectives, one of which is to identify the significant issues associated with alternatives that will be examined in detail in the document, while simultaneously limiting consideration and development of issues that are not truly significant. It is in the NEPA scoping process that potentially significant environmental impacts—those that give rise to the need to prepare an environmental impact statement—should be identified; impacts that are deemed not to be significant need not be developed extensively in the context of the impact statement, thereby keeping the statement focused on impacts of consequence consistent with the ultimate objectives of the NEPA implementing regulations—"to make the environmental impact statement process

more useful to decision makers and the public; and to reduce paperwork and the accumulation of extraneous background data, in order to emphasize the need to focus on real environmental issues and alternatives... [by requiring] impact statements to be concise, clear, and to the point, and supported by evidence that agencies have made the necessary environmental analyses." Executive Order 11991, of May 24, 1977. Transit projects may also generate environmental benefits; these should be highlighted as well—the impact statement process should draw attention to positive impacts, not just negative impacts.

Once the scope of the environmental study, including significant environmental issues to be addressed, is settled, an annotated outline of the document will be prepared and shared with interested agencies and the public. The outline serves at least three worthy purposes, including (1) documenting the results of the scoping process; (2) contributing to the transparency of the process; and (3) providing a clear roadmap for concise development of the environmental document.

#### Purpose and Need for the Project

The purpose of the project is to improve accessibility of the Potomac Yard area and provide more transportation choices for current and future residents, employees, and businesses by establishing a new access point to the regional Metrorail system. This additional access point is needed to address existing and future travel demand in the area resulting from the City of Alexandria's planned development of a major transit-oriented mixed-use activity center in the vicinity of the proposed station.

The project area in Alexandria is located in the Northern Virginia portion of the Washington metropolitan region, which is expected to see approximately 30% population growth in the next 30 years. The project area is located adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods to the west and southeast and an approximately 600,000 square-foot retail center. The existing retail center is approved for redevelopment of 2.25 million square feet of mixed-use development including office, retail, residential and hotel uses. Other properties in the Potomac Yard redevelopment area are approved for a total of approximately 4 million square feet of development. This additional development will impact the existing roadway network with increased travel demand adding additional vehicle and transit trips. The transportation network in the project

area is limited by the heavy rail to the east and limited east-west connectivity west of Route 1.

Currently the project area is not served by Metrorail or any other rapid transit services which provide regional connectivity. The project area is located between two Metrorail stations located 3.1-miles apart. This gap between the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station and the Braddock Road Station is the longest for the portions of the Metrorail system that serve urban residential and commercial corridors. This area is currently served by local bus services that operate in mixed traffic along the congested US Route 1 corridor, yet they have numerous local stops resulting in slow transit travel speeds. This results in relatively long transit travel times to access the area. The Crystal City-Potomac Yard Transitway, which will provide bus priority lanes on nearby Route 1, will improve reliability of local transit services along the Route 1 corridor however, access to the Metrorail system is still needed to accommodate longer regional transit trips.

The anticipated Potomac Yard Metrorail Station was included in WMATA's 1999 *Transit Service Expansion Plan*, the 2010 *Financially Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan for the National Capital Region*, and earlier WMATA and regional transportation plans, in addition to the City of Alexandria's 1992 and 2008 Transportation Master Plans and *North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan*. Establishing a new access point to the regional Metrorail system would provide more transit-friendly development patterns supported by improved access to transit as well as a safe and reliable alternative to automobile travel to and from the Potomac Yard area. Improved access to the regional system is also needed to accommodate a greater share of travel to and from the area on transit, potentially reducing reliance on single-occupant vehicle use, decreasing automobile emissions, and improving regional air quality. The Washington Metropolitan area has been identified as a non-attainment area for ozone and particulate matter since the concentrations of these pollutants exceed acceptable levels as designated by the EPA.

#### Possible Alternatives

The alternatives expected to be addressed in the EIS include:

*No Action Alternative:* The No Action Alternative represents future conditions in the EIS analysis year of 2035 without the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station

Project. The No Action Alternative includes the existing transit and transportation system in the Washington, DC region plus planned improvements for which the need, commitment, financing, and public and political support have been identified, and which may reasonably be expected to be implemented. This alternative is included in the Draft EIS as a means of comparing and evaluating the impacts and benefits of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station alternatives.

**Build Alternatives:** Proposed build alternatives are being evaluated for the project. Potomac Yard is located in the City of Alexandria and the southern edge of Arlington, VA. The area is roughly bound by U.S. Route 1 (Jefferson Davis Highway) to the west, the George Washington Memorial Parkway on the east, Four Mile Run to the north, and E. Howell Avenue on the south.

The study corridor where the project would be located is approximately 1.5 miles in length. Build alternatives will be analyzed that are either along or just to the west of the existing WMATA right-of-way for the Blue and Yellow lines in this area. Build alternatives include:

- **Metrorail Station Alternative A:** Station Alternative A would be located along the existing mainline tracks between the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the CSX Railroad tracks and adjacent to the Potomac Greens Neighborhood.

- **Metrorail Station Alternative B1:** Station Alternative B1 would be located along the existing mainline tracks between the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the CSX Railroad, just to the north of Alternative A.

- **Metrorail Station Alternative B2:** Station Alternative B2 would be located along a short segment of realigned track between the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the CSX Railroad, to the north of Alternative A and to the south of Alternative B1.

- **Metrorail Station Alternative B3:** Station Alternative B3 would be located along a short segment of realigned track between the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the CSX Railroad, just to the east of Alternative B2.

- **Metrorail Station Alternative C1:** Station Alternative C1 would be located along realigned Metrorail track between the CSX Railroad and Route 1.

- **Metrorail Station Alternative C2:** Station Alternative C2 would be located along realigned Metrorail track between the CSX Railroad and Route 1, just east of Alternative C1.

- **Metrorail Station Alternative D1:** Station Alternative D1 would be located along realigned Metrorail tracks between the CSX Railroad and Route 1, just east of Alternative C2.

- **Metrorail Station Alternative D2:** Station Alternative D2 would be located along realigned Metrorail tracks between the CSX Railroad and Route 1, just east of Alternative D1.

#### Possible Effects

FTA will evaluate project-specific as well as indirect and cumulative effects to the existing physical, social, economic, and environmental setting in which the proposed station would be located. The permanent, long-term effects to the region could include, but are not limited to effects to traffic and transportation; land use and socioeconomic; visual character and aesthetics; noise and vibration; historical and archaeological resources; community impacts; natural resources; air quality and climate change; and visual impacts upon the setting of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, a unit of the national park system. Investigation may reveal that the proposed project will not affect or not substantially affect many of these areas. Measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any significant adverse impacts will be identified.

#### FTA Procedures

The regulations implementing NEPA, as well as provisions of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), call for public involvement in the EIS process for transportation projects. In accordance with Section 6002 of SAFETEA-LU, FTA will: (1) Extend an invitation to other Federal and non-Federal agencies and Native American Tribes that may have an interest in the proposed project to become participating agencies (any interested party that does not receive an invitation to become a participating agency can notify any of the contact persons listed earlier in this NOI); (2) provide an opportunity for involvement by participating agencies and the public to help define the purpose and need for the proposed project, as well as the range of alternatives for consideration in the EIS; and (3) establish a plan for coordinating public and agency participation in, and comment on, the environmental review process. A Public Involvement Plan and an Agency Coordination Plan will be developed outlining public and agency involvement for the project. These will be available on the project Web site, <http://www.potomacyardmetro.com>, or

through written request. Opportunities for comment will be provided throughout the EIS process, including public and agency meetings, the project Web site, a mailing address, and a phone information line. Comments received from any of these sources will be considered in the development of the final scope and content of the environmental documents.

An invitation to become a participating or cooperating agency, with scoping materials appended, will be extended to other Federal and non-Federal agencies and Native American Tribes that may have an interest in the proposed project. It is possible that FTA will not be able to identify all Federal and non-Federal agencies and Native American Tribes that may have such an interest. Any Federal or non-Federal agency or Native American Tribe interested in the proposed project that does not receive an invitation to become a participating agency should notify at the earliest opportunity the Project Manager identified above under

#### ADDRESSES.

#### Summary/Next Steps

With the publication of this NOI, the scoping process for the project begins. After the publication of the Draft Scoping Document, a public comment period will begin, allowing the public to offer input on the scope of the EIS until March 15, 2011. Public comments will be received through those methods explained earlier in this NOI and will be incorporated into the Annotated Outline. This document will detail the scope of the EIS and the potential environmental effects that will be considered during the study period. After the completion of the Draft EIS, a public hearing and another public commenting period will allow for input on the EIS, and these comments will be incorporated into the Final EIS report before publication.

#### Paperwork Reduction

The Paperwork Reduction Act seeks, in part, to minimize the cost to the taxpayer of the creation, collection, maintenance, use, dissemination, and disposition of information. Consistent with this goal and with principles of economy and efficiency in government, it is FTA policy to limit insofar as possible distribution of complete printed sets of environmental documents. Accordingly, unless a specific request for a complete printed set of environmental documents is received (preferably at the conclusion of scoping), FTA and its grantees will distribute only the executive summary of the environmental document together

with a Compact Disc of the complete environmental document. A complete printed set of the environmental document will be available for review at the grantee's offices and elsewhere; an electronic copy of the complete environmental document will also be available on the project Web site, <http://www.potomacyardmetro.com>.

#### Other

The City of Alexandria is pursuing USDOT Discretionary Capital Grant funding for the project. The EIS will be prepared in accordance with NEPA and its implementing regulations issued by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR parts 1500–1508) and with the FTA/Federal Highway Administration regulations "Environmental Impact and Related Procedures" (23 CFR part 771). Related environmental procedures to be addressed during the NEPA process include, but are not limited to, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice; Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; and Section 4(f) of the DOT Act (49 U.S.C. 303).

Issued on: January 20, 2011.

**Letitia A. Thompson,**

*Regional Administrator, Federal Transit Administration Region III, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.*

[FR Doc. 2011–1761 Filed 1–26–11; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910–57–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

#### Petition for Exemption From the Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard; Suzuki

**AGENCY:** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

**ACTION:** Grant of petition for exemption.

**SUMMARY:** This document grants in full the American Suzuki Motor Corporation's (Suzuki) petition for an exemption of the Kizashi vehicle line in accordance with 49 CFR part 543, *Exemption from the Theft Prevention Standard*. This petition is granted because the agency has determined that the antitheft device to be placed on the line as standard equipment is likely to be as effective in reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as compliance with the parts-marking requirements of the 49 CFR part 541, *Federal Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard*.

**DATES:** The exemption granted by this notice is effective beginning with the 2012 model year.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Deborah Mazyck, Office of International Policy, Fuel Economy and Consumer Programs, NHTSA, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Ms. Mazyck's phone number is (202) 366–4139. Her fax number is (202) 493–2990.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In a petition dated October 22, 2010, Suzuki requested an exemption from the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard (49 CFR part 541) for the MY 2012 Suzuki Kizashi vehicle line. The petition requested an exemption from parts-marking pursuant to 49 CFR part 543, *Exemption from Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard*, based on the installation of an antitheft device as standard equipment for an entire vehicle line. The agency informed Suzuki by telephone on November 29, 2010, of the areas of insufficiency with respect to its October 22, 2010 petition for exemption. On December 10, 2010, Suzuki submitted supplementary information to the agency addressing its areas of insufficiency.

Under § 543.5(a), a manufacturer may petition NHTSA to grant exemptions for one line of its vehicle lines per year. In its petition, Suzuki provided a detailed description and diagram of the identity, design, and location of the components of the antitheft device for its Kazashi vehicle line. Suzuki will install its passive antitheft device as standard equipment on the line. Key features of the antitheft device will include an electronically coded key fob, Body Control Module (BCM), Engine Control Module (ECM) and a passive immobilizer. Suzuki's submission, along with its supplementary information is considered a complete petition as required by 49 CFR 543.7, in that it meets the general requirements contained in § 543.5 and the specific content requirements of § 543.6. Suzuki stated that the proposed device is designed to be active at all times without direct intervention by the vehicle operator and is fully armed immediately after the ignition has been turned off and the key is removed. The device will provide protection against unauthorized starting and fueling of the engine. Suzuki further stated that the device will also incorporate an audible and visible alarm feature as standard equipment. The lights will flash and the horn will sound in the event of unauthorized vehicle entry.

Suzuki stated that the antitheft device will also utilize a special ignition key and decoder module. Before the vehicle

can be operated, the coded key fob must be confirmed to authorize start and fuel of the engine. Specifically, Suzuki stated that the BCM sends a signal and an electronically-coded identification number to the key fob. If the correct key fob is used, it conducts a calculation and sends the result to the BCM. The BCM also conducts its own calculation and verifies that the BCM and key fob calculation result are identical. If the results are identical, the BCM will send data to the ECM allowing the vehicle to start. If either the key fob identification number or calculation result are not an exact match with the BCM information, Suzuki stated that the ECM will prohibit operation of the vehicle.

In addressing the specific content requirements of 543.6, Suzuki provided information on the reliability and durability of the proposed device. To ensure reliability and durability of the device, Suzuki conducted tests based on its own specified standards. Suzuki provided a detailed list of the tests conducted on the components of its immobilizer device and believes that the device is reliable and durable since it complied with the specified requirements for each test. According to the information provided by Suzuki, the components of the device were tested and the results confirm that the device performed as designed, meeting compliance in climatic, chemical environments, and immunity to various electromagnetic radiations.

Suzuki stated that although there is no theft data available to show the theft reduction benefits for the Kizashi vehicle line at this time, it has compared the effectiveness of its antitheft device with devices which it believes are functionally and operationally similar to its proposed device. Suzuki stated that data published by the agency, the Highway Loss Data Institute and the National Insurance Crime Bureau show the effectiveness of passive immobilizer devices at reducing and deterring theft. Suzuki stated that the agency's theft data show that the theft rate for the 1999 Nissan Maxima equipped with a standard passive immobilizer is 2.5 thefts per thousand vehicles, compared to a theft rate of 5.2 thefts for the 1998 Nissan Maxima without a passive immobilizer, a reduction of more than 50 percent. Additionally, Suzuki noted that data from the Highway Loss Data Institute show that overall theft losses for the 1999 Nissan Maxima (with a passive immobilizer) were reduced by over 85 percent compared to the overall losses for the 1998 Nissan Maxima (without a passive immobilizer). Suzuki provided further information showing